

TO LOVE AND DIE ON HEIR

by
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There's a thing that good artists do when they draw a page where -- regardless of what the writer scripted (or intended) -- they make the page layout/design hierarchal in nature.

That means the page has a single dominant panel and all the other panels serve that one panel. If you know you're working with someone like that, it's a really -- REALLY -- good idea to mimic that in your script (the panel YOU want to be dominant is more descriptive/contains more information/is 'more important' and the others are more sparse/less descriptive).

This script is a pretty good example of that and stronger because of it.

PAGE 1

Panel 1. KYLIE (a young girl, around twelve, dressed all in white) stands at attention in the middle of a dojo. The walls are decorated with deadly weapons: guns, swords, etc. Across from her stands TANJO (a large warrior with tattoos all over his body, and a ridiculously large sword strapped to his back). He towers over her.

CAPTION (KYLIE)

I was trained to be an assassin at a very young age.

Panel 2. Tanjo gestures for Kylie to come forward.

NO DIALOGUE

While not always necessary (and it might even be a personal tic), but you should note when there's no dialogue or SFX in a panel. Especially as economical as you're being. Just for clarity's sake.

Panel 3. Kylie punches Tanjo.

CAPTION (KYLIE)

I took to the training very quickly.

Panel 4. Tanjo back hands Kylie.

NO DIALOGUE

Panel 5. Kylie falls to the floor with a cut on her mouth.

NO DIALOGUE

Panel 6. Kylie wipes the blood from her mouth. She is furious.

NO DIALOGUE

PAGE 2

Splash page showing Kylie's training. We see her age as she learns different things: fight training (Age 12), weapons training (Age 14), poison training (Age 17), follows Tanjo on a job as an apprentice (Age 21).

CAPTION (KYLIE)

I was very good at it.

I've found that montages are a risky proposition in terms of getting the payoff you want in comics. It's a decent gamble. Because when it works, it really works.

Just something to keep in mind.

PAGE 3

Panel 1. TRANDOR III (a young man in his mid twenties, dressed in fancy silk clothes) opens the door to his apartment. The apartment is nice. You wouldn't necessarily look at it and say this apartment belongs to two princes of Fayrii, but it's obvious it's not a pauper's apartment either.

CAPTION (KYLIE)

There's an unspoken rule in the world of assassins.

Panel 2. Trandor walks into his living room to see PALAR (20's, similar clothes to Trandor) on the floor with his throat slit.

CAPTION (KYLIE)

Never fall in love with a Royal...

TRANDOR III

Palar?

Panel 3. Kylie (now in her mid twenties, attractive, slim, a little taller than Trandor and dressed all in black) walks out of the shadows holding a bloody knife.

CAPTION (KYLIE)

...Because you never know when you'll be hired to kill them.

KYLIE

Did you know him?

Panel 4. Trandor looks down at Palar's body.

TRANDOR III
He was my cousin.

KYLIE
Were you close?

Panel 5. Trandor looks back up at Kylie.

TRANDOR III
Not particularly, no. Who hired...

KYLIE
I can't say. There are rules.

TRANDOR III
Was it my father? My Uncle?

KYLIE
I can't say.

TRANDOR III
Right. Rules.

You could probably play with the distance between the two of them on this page to lean into the staging on the next page.

PAGE 4

Panel 1. Kylie moves to the exit of the apartment.

TRANDOR III
Am I in any danger?

Panel 2. Kylie turns back to face Trandor.

KYLIE
No. The contract was just for your cousin.

TRANDOR III
Well, that's good news. Not for my cousin, but still... you're quite pretty.

Panel 3. Kylie is confused.

KYLIE
Thank you?

TRANDOR III
This is a little awkward, but would you like to have dinner with me?

Panel 4. Kylie moves closer to Trandor holding the knife under his nose.

KYLIE
Are you asking me on a date?

TRANDOR III
Yes?

KYLIE
I just killed your cousin.

TRANDOR III
That's why it's a little awkward. I know this great place. They serve a delicious roasted runnertail.

CAPTION (KYLIE)
Never fall in love with a Royal.

Panel 5. Kylie lowers the knife and looks at Trandor. She's curious.

KYLIE
I could eat.

Pretty perfect here. Really nice turn and juxtaposition.

PAGE 5

Panel 1. Kylie and Trandor have dinner at a lavish restaurant. There is a half eaten meal in front of them. She laughs at something he's said; it's not something she's used to doing.

NO DIALOGUE

Panel 2. Kylie and Trandor stand next to each other at his cousin's funeral. Kylie awkwardly tries to comfort him.

NO DIALOGUE

Panel 3. Kylie and Trandor have sex in Trandor's bedroom.

NO DIALOGUE

Panel 4. Kylie and Trandor lay in bed together post coitus. Trandor is asleep. Kylie watches him lovingly.

CAPTION (KYLIE)
Never. Fall. In. Love. With. A.
Royal.

Panel 5. Close up of Kylie with an "I'm screwed" look on her face.

KYLIE

Oh, shit.

Okay. Strong script.

Benefits greatly from being the first five pages and really accelerating into the story.

I do think that the dialogue (which these kinds of stories really hang on) could have been a little sharper on pages 1 and 2, but that's me being super picky.

Really good job overall.

- JH